DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 246 360 CG 017 602

AUTHOR Johnson, John A.; Cheek, Jonathan M.
TITLE Influence of Adolescent Social Cliques on Vocational Identity.
PUB DATE Apr 84
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association (Baltimore, MD, April 12-15, 1984).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; Career Development; *Occupational Aspiration; *Peer Groups; *Peer Influence; *Personality Traits; Secondary Education; Self Concept; *Social Development; Vocational Maturity
IDENTIFIERS *Vocational Identity

ABSTRACT

While Holland's (1973) theory of personality types and vocational identity is widely used, the theory does not specify the developmental antecedents of the six personality types. To examine the relationship between membership in adolescent social cliques and vocational identity in early adulthood, four groups of college students (N=192) participated in the study. The first two groups generated a list of naturally existing cliques in junior high schools, and decided which cliques were similar to Holland types. Students then completed the Self Directed Search (SDS) and discussed the relationship between their previous clique membership, their SDS scores and their vocational aspirations. The third group identified their previous social clique and completed the SDS. The fourth group of students completed the SDS, the California Psychological Inventory (CPI), Cheek's Identity Scales (IS) and the Social Clique Membership (SCM) scale, a Likert scale denoting membership in six common social cliques. Results showed that all six cliques (Motorheads, Brains, Freaks, Socialites, Politicos, Conformists) were identified by each group of students, though not necessarily by the same labels. Knowledge of current school social structure confirmed the nature of the cliques. While analysis of test scores showed that clique types were not evenly distributed across Holland's types, the results indicated clear links between early adolescent cliques and later vocational identity. (MCF)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED246360

INFLUENCE OF ADOLESCENT SOCIAL CLIQUES ON VOCATIONAL IDENTITY

John A. Johnson
Pennsylvania State University

Jonathan M. Cheek
Wellesley College

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John A. Johnson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CG 017602

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, Baltimore, MD, April 12-15, 1984.

(1) Title of paper: Influence of Adolescent Social Cliques on Vocational Identity

(2) Authors and institution: John A. Johnson and Jonathan M. Cheek
Pennsylvania State University and
Wellesley College (AA)

(3) N/A

(4) Text of abstract: Membership in junior high school cliques--Motorheads, Brains, Freaks, Socialites, Politicos, Conformists--was found to be related to vocational identity in early adulthood, defined by Holland's personality types.

(5) Topical session preference: Personality, Adolescent, Social Developmental

(6) No slides

(7) Mailing address: John A. Johnson
Pennsylvania State University
College Place
DuBois, PA 15801
Office: (814) 371-2800, ext. 15
Home: (814) 371-9129

(8) N/A

Accepted for presentation at the April 1984 Convention of the Eastern Psychological Association, Baltimore

(1) Title of Paper: Influence of Adolescent Social Cliques on Vocational Identity

(2) Topical Session Preference: Personality, Developmental, Social Developmental

(3) Problem or Major Purpose:

Holland's (1973) theory of personality types and vocational identity has become the most widely used system in vocational psychology; it is currently used to organize and interpret the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (Campbell & Holland, 1972) and the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (Viernstein, 1972). One major gap in Holland's theory, however, is specification of the developmental antecedents of Holland's six personality types (Kelso, 1976; Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1983). Kelso's dissertation attempted to fill that gap and did report that parental social class and attitudes were related to adolescents' vocational aspirations. Kelso also reported that friends tended to share the same vocational interests and reject students with highly dissimilar interests. For example girls with Investigative (scientific) vocational interests tended to associate with each other and to reject girls with Conventional (clerical) interests. The present paper extends Kelso's work by examining the relationship between membership in early adolescent social cliques and vocational identity in early adulthood.

Erikson's (1956) notion that identity formation is a major developmental task for adolescents is a truism today. Erikson's psychosocial theory states that mature identity is achieved through

the balance of the individual's personal needs with the opportunities and requirements of the social environment. Most developmental textbooks declare that that the social influence of peers begins to outweigh parental influence during the teen years, yet research on the specific nature of peer influence on vocational identity is virtually nonexistent.

The purpose of the research reported here was to identify naturally existing social cliques in the junior high school years and to trace membership in these cliques to identity in young adulthood. We hypothesized that we would find among existing social cliques six cliques whose members exhibit interests, values, and personality traits similar to Holland's six personality types: Realistic (asocial, masculine people who like to work with their hands); Investigative (intellectual, curious people interested in science); Artistic (original, nonconforming people interested in art); Social (friendly, outgoing people interested in social activities); Enterprising (ambitious, energetic people interested in politics); and Conventional (conforming, orderly people interested in business). We felt that peer group experience within a given clique would act as a socializing agent that would direct and form adolescents' identities toward the Holland types.

(4) Subjects:

Four groups of subjects were used: 34 introductory psychology students (12 male, 22 female) from Towson State University in Maryland; 11 adults (2 male, 9 female) from two different

developmental psychology seminars at the Pennsylvania State University at DuBois; 68 introductory psychology students (34 male, 34 female) from the Penn State, DuBois, Campus; and 79 students (43 male, 36 female) enrolled in mental health courses at the Penn State, DuBois, Campus. All subjects completed the prodecures described below as part of their course experience.

(5) Procedure:

The Towson State students were divided into five discussion groups whose purpose was to generate a list of naturally existing social cliques in junior high schools. The students also indicated to which kind of clique they belonged when they attended junior high school. The students then completed Holland's Self-Directed Search (SDS; 1979), which determines an individual's resemblance to Holland's six personality types. Next, the first author described Holland's (1973) six personality types and, through group discussion, the class reached an informal consensus on which social cliques were most similar to the Holland types. Finally, the students wrote essays in which they discussed the relationships (or lack of relationships) between their own junior high school cliques, scores on the SDS, and current career aspirations.

Each adult in the two developmental seminars was asked to generate a list of naturally existing junior high school social cliques from their school days. Two seminar participants who were associated with school systems also generated a list of cliques from their knowledge of current social structure in the schools.

The Penn State introductory students were asked to identify the social clique to which they belonged when they attended junior high school, using the lists generated by the previous two groups of subjects. They also completed the SDS.

The mental health students completed four measures. The first three were standard psychometric instruments: Holland's SDS; Gough's (1975) California Psychological Inventory (CPI), which contains 18 scales to measure normal differences in personality; and Cheek's Identity Scales (Cheek & Briggs, 1983; Cheek & Hogan, 1983; Hogan & Cheek, 1983), which measure a person's involvement in personal identity (personal values, emotions, thoughts) and social identity (popularity, interpersonal relationships, group memberships).

The fourth measure, Social Clique Membership, was designed for the present study. It consists of six five-step Likert scales to denote the degree to which a person feels that he or she belonged to six common social cliques in junior high schools. These cliques, identified by the first two groups in this study, are: (1) Motorheads, a predominantly male clique, who were generally from a working class background and enjoyed shop classes and working on cars; (2) Brains, who excelled in science and math courses; (3) Freaks, who dressed unconventionally, enrolled in art, music, and theatre courses, and were marginally delinquent; (4) Socialites, who were well-dressed, popular, and were members of athletic teams or cheerleaders; (5) Politicos, the student leaders who were interested in social science courses; and (6) Conformists, who were well-behaved

students interested in pursuing conventional careers such as business for males and clerical work for females.

Data from the first two samples were used principally to determine and clarify the nature of social cliques. A chi-square analysis was used to assess the relationship between junior high school clique membership and current Holland vocational type for the first group of subjects. The same chi-square analysis was also performed for data from the third group. For the fourth group, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed between Social Clique Membership scores and SDS, CPI, and Personal and Social Identity scores.

(6) Results:

When the five small Towson State discussion groups reassembled, we found that all six cliques--Motorheads, Brains, Freaks, Socialites, Politicos, Conformists--had been identified by one label or another by every discussion groups. Data from the adult developmental psychology seminars confirmed the cliques identified by the students. The labels varied, but the nature of the cliques appeared invariant.

The chi-square value for the Towson State data was 65.2, $p < .001$, Indicating that clique types were not evenly distributed across Holland types. A detailed examination showed that all Motorheads were Realistic types; Brains were split evenly between Investigative and Artistic types; two-thirds of the Socialites were Social types and one-third, Enterprising types; all Politicos were Enterprising

types; and two-thirds of the Conformists were Social types with the remainder split between Enterprising and Conventional types.

The chi-square value for the Penn State data was 67.4, $p < .001$, replicating the findings for the first group. The detailed analysis yielded result highly similar to the first analysis, with two slight differences. First, the Realistic and Social dimensions were more interrelated, with some Motorheads scoring as Social types and some Socialites scoring as Realistic types. Second, there was a stronger association between the Conformist clique and Conventional vocational interests.

The results of the correlation analyses in the last group, presented in Table 1, generally support the above findings. The results were highly similar for males and females, so the data were combined for presentation.

Scores on the Motorhead scale correlated negatively with all of the SDS scales except Realistic, $r = .14$, $p = .12$. Motorheads also tended to score low on the CPI Responsibility, Socialization, and Femininity scales and did not score particularly high on either the Personal or Social Identity scales. This suggests Motorheads conventionally masculine and somewhat alienated.

Brains tended to have Conventional vocational interests, $r = .29$, $p < .01$. They scored relatively high on the Acheivement via Conformance and Femininity scales, and tended to be invested in Personal Identity. Apparantly this group of high achievers in junior high school are applying their scientific and mathematical abilities

to areas like accounting and computer science, rather than the natural sciences.

Freaks scored highest in Artistic interests, $r = .47$, $p < .001$. They scored high on the CPI Dominance and Self-Acceptance scales and low on the CPI Socialization scale. They tended to be invested in Personal Identity. This pattern describes a group of people who are independent and self-confident.

The Socialites were somewhat interested in Conventional occupations and strongly aversive to Realistic occupations, $r = -.51$, $p < .001$. They tended to score high on the CPI Self-Acceptance and Femininity scales and to be strongly invested in the Social aspect of identity, $r = .39$, $p < .001$. Young teens who were in the popular, social cliques apparently are more likely to pursue Conventional than Social occupations.

Scores on the Politico scale were not strongly related to any SDS scales; Politicos were somewhat averse to Realistic occupations, however, $r = -.26$, $p < .01$. They tended to score high on the CPI Dominance, Capacity for Status, Sociability, Social Presence, Self-Acceptance, and Intellectual Efficiency scales, and on the Personal Identity scale. Politicos appear to be the most interpersonally competent of all the cliques.

Conformists tended to have Conventional occupational interests, $r = .23$, $p < .05$. They received relatively high scores on the CPI scales Responsibility, Socialization, and Achievement via Conformance, and low scores on Flexibility. They were not

particularly invested in either aspect of identity. This pattern of scores describes a conforming, achieving group of students.

(7) Implications and Conclusions:

The obvious limitation of the present research is that it relies on retrospective accounts of social clique membership rather than a true longitudinal design. A longitudinal study following the same conceptual framework as the present study is in the planning stages. Despite the weakness of the present study's nonlongitudinal design, data on the existence of the six types of cliques was robust, replicating across several groups of different ages and cohorts.

The results also show clear links between experiences within early adolescent cliques and later vocational identity. The results do not indicate that the links are unidimensional and straightforward; adolescents' socialization experiences do not lie within one conceptually pure clique that leads to one pure Holland type. Adolescents are often members of more than one type of clique, and Holland traditionally defines occupational interests by patterns of resemblance to at least three of the types (a psychologist, for example, is primarily Investigative with secondary Social and tertiary Artistic interests). Follow-up research on this topic should probably follow a longitudinal, multivariate design linking membership in all relevant cliques to the total vocational interest profile.

(8) References:

Campbell, D. P., & Holland, J. L. (1972). Applying Holland's theory to Strong's data. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 2, 353-376.

Cheek, J. M., & Briggs, S. R. (1983). Self-consciousness and aspects of identity. Journal of Research in Personality, 16, 401-408.

Cheek, J. M., & Hogan, R. (1983). Self-concepts, self-presentations, and moral judgments. In J. Suls & A. Greenwald (Eds.), Psychological perspectives on the self (Vol. 2, pp. 249-273). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Erikson, E. H. (1956). The problem of ego identity. Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 4, 56-121.

Gough, H. G. (1975). Manual for the California Psychological Inventory (rev. ed.) Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Hogan, R., & Cheek, J. M. (1983). Identity, authenticity, and maturity. In T. R. Sarbin & K. E. Scheibe (Eds.), Studies in social identity (pp. 339-357). NY: Praeger.

Holland, J. L. (1973). Making vocational choices: A theory of careers. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Holland, J. L. (1979). The Self-Directed Search professional manual. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Kelso, G. I. (1976). Explorations of the developmental antecedents of Holland's occupational types. Unpublished doctoral

dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

Viernstein, M. C. (1972). The extension of Holland's occupational classification to all occupations in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 2, 107-121.

Vondracek, F. W., Lerner, R. M., & Schulenberg, J. E. (1983). The concept of development in vocational theory and intervention. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 23, 179-202.

Table 1

Correlates of Social Clique Membership (N=79)

	Clique					
	Motorheads	Brains	Freaks	Socialites	Politicos	Conformists
Holland SDS						
Realistic	14	-14	01	-51***	-26**	-10
Investigative	-16	10	05	-20	-02	13
Artistic	-20	13	47***	-15	09	-16
Social	-15	04	28**	08	12	-03
Enterprising	-09	09	13	09	05	00
Conventional	-12	29**	06	19*	09	23*
Cheek Identity						
Personal	-05	24*	23*	05	24*	01
Social	06	-04	-09	39***	15	18
Gough CPI						
Dominance	15	09	21*	18	33**	-05
Capacity for Status	-15	02	14	-07	29**	-14
Sociability	-10	-05	09	18	32**	-07
Social Presence	-09	-09	03	20*	29**	-14
Self-Acceptance	03	07	21*	24*	36**	-12
Well Being	-01	-10	-06	-04	-02	09
Responsibility	-32**	21*	-10	-12	19*	33**
Socialization	-26*	15	-42***	08	12	47**
Self-Control	-07	-03	-17	-19*	-06	17
Tolerance	-21*	03	-07	-13	15	05
Good Impression	04	-05	05	-21*	-06	-02
Communality	-11	08	-05	02	01	17
Achievement via Conformance	-22*	28**	-09	-01	18	32**
Achievement via Independence	-12	13	01	-22*	10	-14
Intellectual Efficiency	-17	13	-01	-18	27**	-04
Psychological Mindedness	05	-15	05	-09	16	-11
Flexibility	-08	-11	14	-16	-12	-27**
Femininity	-31**	27**	06	23*	10	15

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$ (all tests one-tailed)

Note. Decimal points omitted from all correlation coefficients.